

Welcome Swallows at the same time. Its description appears to agree with that of the Spine-tailed Swift but I am not familiar with this species.

I noted Fork-tailed Swifts (*Apus pacificus*) in the Albany district about the same time. On January 21 three of these swifts were circling in the sky near Little Grove. The wind at the time was changing from north to west. On January 26 a single swift was seen momentarily over Eclipse Island.

—JOHN WARHAM, Perth.

Red-backed Kingfisher at Perth.—On June 28, 1956, a Red-backed Kingfisher (*Halcyon pyrrhopygia*) was seen at South Belmont. The bird was so far out of range as given by Serventy and Whittell (*Handbook of the Birds of W.A.*), i.e., all over the State, except the south-west corner, to Geraldton, Kellerberrin and Norseman, that particular notice was taken. It was perched on a telegraph wire sunning its back. The wings were drooped, exposing the back to the sun. This revealed that the lower back was a conspicuous rufous-brown. The bird's head had almost no black on it, except for a line through the eye and a few streaks on the crown, the remainder being white.

I am familiar with this species as I kept a bird in captivity at Nedlands for over six months. However, in an absence of six weeks during May and June, 1956, the bird disappeared. No corpse was found in the cage so I assume it escaped. The captive bird was moulting at the beginning of May and had a number of broken tail feathers, and also "hunger bars" across the other tail feathers. The bird at Belmont had a perfect tail.

The habit of sunning itself was noticed often with the captive bird. In addition to drooped wings the bird would raise the rufous-brown back feathers so the sunlight and heat could penetrate to the skin (cf. Warham's observations on similar behaviour in the Senegal Dove, *W.A. Nat.*, 4, 1954: 91).

If the bird I observed at Belmont was the same as that which escaped from my home at Nedlands it would be a remarkable, though not impossible coincidence.

—ERIC LINDGREN, Nedlands.

Silver Gull and Blowfish.—The poisonous properties of the common blowfish (*Spheroides pleurogramma*) were well illustrated by an incident which occurred at Point Peron on December 10, 1956. My attention was drawn by the fact that an immature Silver Gull (*Larus novae-hollandiae*) had found a dead fish and was being allowed to eat it without any interference by other gulls in the vicinity. This unusual behaviour caused me to watch the bird through binoculars. The following details from my field notes tell the story:

9.15 a.m. Seagull, immature, flecks of brown on neck and wings. Found dead blowfish and tried to swallow. Kneaded along body with beak several times.

9.17. Able to swallow fish head first.